



Fluidity of Early Grammatical Categories in Sanskrit

Author(s): Madhav M. Deshpande

Source: *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 122, No. 2, Indic and Iranian Studies in Honor of Stanley Insler on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday (Apr. - Jun., 2002), pp. 244-247

Published by: [American Oriental Society](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3087617>

Accessed: 10/06/2014 01:46

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



American Oriental Society is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the American Oriental Society*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

FLUIDITY OF EARLY GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES IN SANSKRIT

MADHAV M. DESHPANDE

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Grammatical categories as they appear in Pāṇini's grammar may seem defined in unambiguous ways. However, the boundaries of Pāṇini's categories can be unclear, and especially as we examine the Vedic padapāṭha and their treatment in the prātiśākhya, we begin to unearth a long period when many early scholastic traditions were trying out different grammatical formulations and when the understanding of causal factors for euphonic and other transformations was not entirely clear. Different Vedic traditions not only differ from each other, but there is often indecision manifest within a given tradition. The prātiśākhya openly refer to such ambiguity in the padapāṭha by using terms like *sandeha*, *saṁśaya*, *anyāya*, etc. This paper investigates evidence for this early grammatical experimentation.

OUR RELIANCE ON THE GRAMMATICAL TRADITIONS such as the one formulated in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* often leads us to assume that grammatical categories are fully defined and are beyond confusion. However, a study of the Vedic padapāṭha and the prātiśākhya, in addition to Pāṇini, convinces us of the fluidity of the early grammatical categories. In this paper, I shall discuss the category of *samāsa* in relation to the works mentioned above. I shall discuss the fluid scope of this term, its application to diverse phenomena in Vedic texts, and the gray areas indicated by the divisions or lack of divisions seen in the padapāṭha. This gives us some understanding of the formative phase of grammatical concepts in ancient India. A good example of this fluidity is the so-called *iva-samāsa*. I shall discuss the treatment of this phenomenon in the padapāṭha and grammatical traditions.

For the past several years, I have been engaged in editing and translating the text of the *Śaunakīya-Caturādhyāyikā*, a prātiśākhya related to the *Śaunakīya Atharvaveda*. After its publication some time ago, I have been working on the edition of the *Jaṭāpāṭha* and *Kramapāṭha* for several kāṇḍas of the *Śaunakīya Atharvaveda*. This has given me an opportunity to view closely the grammatical analyses as they are presented in the padapāṭha and the related recitational permutations and the traditions represented in the prātiśākhya and Pāṇini. Here I would like to present some comparative thoughts about these materials as representing a spectrum of efforts in grammatical understanding and analysis.

Consider rule 4.2.5 (*ṣoḍaśī sandehāt*) of the *Śaunakīya Caturādhyāyikā* (=CA). The rule says that due to confusion about its constituents and their fusion, the

word *ṣoḍaśī* has not been split up with an avagraha in the padapāṭha. While the statement of the CA truthfully reflects the state of affairs in the padapāṭha, i.e., that there is no analysis of this word given there, the reason offered for it is a reflection of the thinking of the author of the CA, and does not tell us precisely why the padapāṭha does not split the word. It is an effort to read into the mind of the author of the padapāṭha, but we have to admit that we have no direct access to the mind of the author of the padapāṭha. The facts of the padapāṭha could be explained in a number of possible ways, but we cannot be sure. In addition to suggesting "confusion" about parts of this word, the author of the CA himself offers an analysis for this word (CA 1.3.1: *ṣaṭ-purasor ukāro 'ntyasya daśadāśayor ādeś ca mūrdhanyaḥ*): "The final consonants of *ṣaṭ* and *puras* are replaced with *u* before the words *daśa* and *dāśa*, respectively, and the initial *d* of these two words is replaced with a cerebral *ḍ*." The author of the CA feels free to offer his own analysis for the words *ṣoḍaśa* and *puroḍāśa*, but not free to alter the received text of the padapāṭha. This fortunately provides us with glimpses of the early fluidity of grammatical analysis. There are several rules in the *Vājasaneyi-Prātiśākhya*, where the author of the prātiśākhya offers related reasons for the lack of analysis of words in the padapāṭha; cf. VPR 5.34 (*pāntrā-nuddro'bbhrāya saṁśayāt*) and 5.38 (*uttambhanādīnyādisaṁśayāt*).

A similar case is seen in CA 1.3.2 (*kṛpe rephasya lakārah*), which says that the *r* of the root *kṛp* is replaced by *l*. While a rule like this, with an exact Pāṇinian parallel in P. 8.2.18 (*kṛpo ro laḥ*), marks an advance of the grammatical science, the padapāṭha of the AV does not

show any sign yet of having arrived at this conclusion. This is shown by the lack of the so-called restoration (*samāpatti*) of the derivationally original *r* in the recitational varieties based on the *padapāṭha*.

CA 4.1.49 (*kṛtve samāso vā nānāpadadarśanāt*) offers a good example of a number of issues. The rule says: “The (affix) *kṛtva(s)* is optionally compounded (with the stem in the *padapāṭha*), since one diversely sees it separated or not as an independent word.” Regarding the behavior of the *padapāṭha*, it is clear that *kṛtvas* is sometimes separated with an avagraha, and sometimes it is given as a completely independent pada. Here, the author of the *prātiśākhya* did not come up with an explanation of *sandeha* “confusion,” but provided an option as an interpretation, considering both types of practice authoritative. The author of the *prātiśākhya* had no explanation why in some cases there is a separation of *kṛtvas* with an avagraha, indicative of some sort of compounding (*samāsa*), and why in other cases it was given as a completely independent separate pada. Here, the author of the *padapāṭha* may have a reason of his own, but certainly that reason was not apparent to the author of the *prātiśākhya*. Consider the examples under this rule.

Examples with complete separation in the *padapāṭha*:

dāśa / *kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9)

saptā / *kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9)

Example with separation with an avagraha in the *padapāṭha*:

aṣṭa- kṛtvaḥ (AV 11.2.9)

The author of the CA could not provide an explanation of these facts, except noting the variation in the practice of the *padapāṭha*. However, a verse cited in the commentary *Caturādhyāyibhāṣya* (on CA 4.1.49) offers us a clue to the possible reason for this variation in the *padapāṭha*. The verse (*saṃkhyāyā anudāttāyā aṣṭaśabdāt samasyate*) says that the unaccented (*anudātta*) number word *aṣṭa* is compounded (*samasyate*) with *kṛtvas*. Perhaps this gives us a clue to why the author of the *padapāṭha* did not presume compounding in the examples *dāśa* / *kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9) and *saptā* / *kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9), because here the words *dāśa* and *saptā* are accented words with an *udātta* syllable in each. Was this the reason why the *padapāṭha* assumed compounding in one case and separate words in other cases? It is possible, but we cannot be absolutely certain.

However, this raises a number of important questions. The author of the CA believes that the *padapāṭha* rep-

resentation of *aṣṭa- kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9) with an avagraha is a case of compounding (*samāsa*). As for the *padapāṭha*, all we can say is that here is a case of an expression split up with an avagraha. But we cannot be sure that every case of such representation with an avagraha was considered as a case of compounding (*samāsa*) by the author of the *padapāṭha*. In terms of representation in the *padapāṭha*, *rāja-su* (AV 6.98.1) is similar to *aṣṭa- kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9). Are we willing to say that the *padapāṭha* considered both of these as cases of compounding (*samāsa*)?

At this stage, we enter into a terminological mire. To state our case historically, we have only the representation of words in the *padapāṭha*, but no grammatical categories explicitly identified by the authors of the *padapāṭha*. On the other hand, the authors of the *prātiśākhya*s and grammarians like Pāṇini belong to a later period, where grammatical terms are applied to linguistic phenomena, but then the terms need precise definitions. While the *prātiśākhya*s and Pāṇini do often try to account for the facts of the *padapāṭha*, can these latter-day explanations be read into the mind of the author of the *padapāṭha*?

Obviously, the author of the CA uses the term *samāsa* in ways that differ substantially from its use in Pāṇini's grammar. For Pāṇini, *-kṛtvasUC* is an affix (*pratyaya*); cf. P. 5.4.17 (*saṃkhyāyāḥ kriyābhyāvr̥ttigaṇane kṛtvasuc*). For Pāṇini, the term *samāsa* “compound” is basically restricted to a combination of two nominal stems. Hence a combination of a stem and an affix cannot be a *samāsa* in the Pāṇinian sense, but a case like *aṣṭa- kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9) must then be a *taddhita* derivation in Pāṇinian terms. Can we easily find a Pāṇinian explanation of the different treatment of *dāśa* / *kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9) and *saptā* / *kṛtvaḥ* (AV 11.2.9) in the *padapāṭha*? If these were also conceived by the *padapāṭha* as *taddhita* formations, i.e., stem+affix combinations, why were they represented as completely separate *padas*?

This makes us think about other possible reasons that may have allowed the *padapāṭha* to distinguish between these examples. One hypothesis is that the reason for considering certain expressions as compounded or fused into a new unity is the accents of that expression. The rules of the CA give clear indication of the connection of accents with the concept of *samāsa*. CA 4.1.5 (*kriyāyoge gatiḥ pūrvāḥ samāso yāvanto 'nucāḥ samarthās tān samasyet*) says: “A preceding unaccented particle (*gati*) is compounded with a verb. As many semantically related unaccented particles as there may be, they should all be compounded with the following verb.” Such use of the term *samāsa* to refer to a word group which seems to follow the accent-pattern of a single pada is seen widely

in the rules of the CA. Consider P. 6.1.158 (*anudāttaṃ padam ekavarjam*), which says that a word is without udātta accent, except for a single syllable. This becomes the prototype of an expression being treated accentually as a single word. The compounds (*samāsa*), even in their Pāṇinian form, generally follow this pattern, with certain explicitly stated exceptions. If such an accent pattern is taken as a sign of univerbation, then it is easy to see why *dāśa* / *kṛtvah* (AV 11.2.9) and *saptā* / *kṛtvah* (AV 11.2.9) are treated in the *padapāṭha* as separate uncompounded *padas*, but *aṣṭa*- *kṛtvah* (AV 11.2.9) is treated as a univerbal expression, whether we call it *samāsa* or something else.

Was this notion in the mind of the author of the *padapāṭha*? Here we get into fuzzy and murky waters. Consider the case of the so-called *iva*-compound. In the *padapāṭha* for the RV and AV, the item *iva*, which is unaccented, is treated as compounded with the preceding word. Again, to be precise, we do know how the authors of the *padapāṭha* represented such expressions, i.e., split with an *avagraha*, but we do not know exactly what their theoretical conceptions were. The CA rule 4.1.63 (*ive ca*), without using the formal term *samāsa*, describes the practice of the AV-*Padapāṭha*: “Also, before *iva*, the preceding word is separated with an *avagraha* in the *padapāṭha*.” The presence of the *avagraha* in the *padapāṭha* indicates minimally the perceived univerbal status of such an expression, but not much more.

If the characteristic accent-group was the defining feature for considering the *iva* expressions as univerbal expressions—on par with other similar cases—consider the dilemma. While the accent features of *iva* remain the same, the different traditions of *padapāṭha* treat *iva*-expressions differently. For instance, the RV and AV *padapāṭhas* represent *iva* with an *avagraha*, indicating univerbation, the *padapāṭha* of the *Taittirīya-Saṃhitā* represents *iva* as a completely independent separate *pada*. Besides the difference in the grammatical conceptions, such a difference in representation leads to wide differences in the further recitational permutations like *kramapāṭha* and *jaṭapāṭha*. For example, the TS (1.1.14.2) reads *hiténeva jayāmasi*. The TS-*Padapāṭha* reads *hiténa* / *iva* / *jayāmasi* /. With such a representation in the *pada*-

pāṭha, the *kramapāṭha* reads *hiténeva* / *ivajayāmasi* /. On the other hand, consider the example *jánirivābhí sám-vṛtaḥ* from AV (20.5.1). Here, the *padapāṭha*, like the RV-*Padapāṭha*, reads: *jániḥ-iva* / *abhí* / *sám-vṛtaḥ* /. With such a univerbal representation of the *iva* phrase, the *kramapāṭha* (in my forthcoming edition) reads: *jánirivābhí* / *jánirivéti jániḥ-iva* / *abhísám-vṛtaḥ* / *sám-vṛta* *íti sám-vṛtaḥ* /. With the same basic linguistic facts, the traditions of the AV and RV *padapāṭhas* go in one direction, and the TS-*Padapāṭha* goes in another direction. This means that different *padapāṭha* authors did not agree with each other in their theoretical conceptions, nor in their representation.

To make a long story short, the same disagreement over *iva*-phrases continues into the Pāṇinian tradition. Pāṇini himself takes no note of the *iva*-phrase as a *samāsa*. However, it is Kātyāyana who introduces this notion in one of his Vārtikas: *ivena samāso vibhaktyalopaḥ pūrvapadaprakṛtisvaratvaṃ ca* (Vt. 2 on P. 2.1.4). The Vārtika indicates the exceptional nature of this *samāsa*, which is technically considered as a *tatpuruṣa* compound. As an exceptional feature, the case ending of the first word is not deleted, and, again as an exceptional feature, the first member retains its original accent, unlike what happens in a typical *tatpuruṣa*-compound, i.e., the udātta on the final syllable of the compound. Thus, even while admitting this as a compound, Kātyāyana was forced to admit its exceptional behavior. It is possible that the Vedic tradition with which Pāṇini was affiliated did not accept the so-called *iva*-compound. However, if the *padapāṭha* of the *Kāṇva-Saṃhitā* of the Śukla Yajurveda is any indication (cf. *pitévéti pitā-iva*, 3.3.16), Kātyāyana was affiliated with Vedic traditions which accepted such a compound. The later tradition struggles with the question of whether this is a *nitya* “obligatory” compound, or an optional one, and most commentators conclude that it must be treated as an optional compound. Especially with the loss of accents in the later classical language, the very purpose of such a conception is lost, and it becomes a mere scholastic relic whose purpose and function is no longer fully understood (cf. *Kāvyaprakāśa*, p. 557, and the discussion in the commentary *Bālabodhini*).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Atharvaveda-Saṃhitā* (Śaunakīyā) (AV). Edited by Vishva Bandhu. 4 volumes. Hoshiarpur: Vishveshvarananda Vaidika Research Institute, 1960–64.
- Kāvyaṇprakāśa of Mammaṭa, with the Commentary Bālabodhinī by Vāmanācārya Jhaḷkīkar*. Ed. R. D. Karmarkar. 7th ed. Pune: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1965.
- Ṛgveda-Saṃhitā*. (RV). Ed. N. S. Sontakke and C. G. Kashikar. 5 volumes. Pune: Vaidika Samshodhana Mandala, 1933–51.
- Śaunakīyā Caturādhyāyikā*. (CA). A *Prātiśākhya* of the Śaunakīya Atharvaveda with the commentaries Caturādhyāyibhāṣya, Bhārgava-Bhāskara-Vṛtti, and Pañcasandhi. Ed. and trans. Madhav M. Deshpande. Harvard Oriental Series, vol. 52. Cambridge, Mass.: Dept. of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, Harvard Univ., 1997.
- Taittirīya-Saṃhitā* (TS), with the Commentaries of Sāyaṇa and Bhaṭṭabhāskara, vol. I. Ed. N. S. Sontakke and T. N. Dharmadhikari. Pune: Vaidika Samshodhana Mandala, 1970.
- Vājasaneyi-Prātiśākhya* (VPR), with the Commentaries of Uvaṭa and Anantabhaṭṭa. Ed. V. K. Varma. Banaras: Jñānaprakāśa Pratiṣṭhāna, 1975.